

# Congressional Notes

## Cramming

### Actions Your Constituents Can Take

**Your constituents can protect themselves by:**

- Reading all forms and promotional materials -- including the fine print -- before signing up for telephone services.
- Keeping a record of the telephone services they have authorized and used -- including calls placed to 900 numbers and other types of information services. These records can be helpful when billing descriptions are unclear.
- Carefully reviewing their telephone bill every month. Look for company names they do not recognize, charges for calls they did not make, and charges for services they did not authorize.
- Immediately calling companies that charged them for calls they did not make or services they did not authorize. Ask the companies to explain the charges and request billing adjustments for incorrect charges.
- Explaining their concerns about unclear or unauthorized charges to their local telephone company.
- Asking their local telephone company what the procedure is for removing incorrect charges from their bill if the companies responsible for the charges do not sufficiently respond to their concerns.

**Your constituents can take the following actions if companies will not remove incorrect charges from their telephone bills:**

Contact their state regulatory commission for calls placed to locations within the same state or telephone services provided within the state.

Contact the Federal Trade Commission regarding charges on their bill for non-telephone services by writing to the Federal Trade Commission, Public Reference Branch, Drop H240, Washington, D.C. 20580 -- or by calling the FTC's Consumer Response Center at (202)326-3128. Non-telephone services include "content" services such as psychic hotlines.

Send a written complaint letter to the FCC regarding interstate or international services and charges. Your constituent can obtain information on how to file a complaint on the FCC's Web Site at [http://www.fcc.gov/ccb/consumer\\_news/](http://www.fcc.gov/ccb/consumer_news/) or by calling the FCC's National Call Center toll-free at 1-888-CALL FCC (1-888-225-5322).



**Remember that companies compete for their telephone service business. Your constituents should use their buying power wisely and shop around to find the best deal for their service needs and calling patterns.**